

PLANK FIGURES AS CRADLEBOARDS

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This paper introduces a new interpretation of plank figures as abstracted and anthropomorphized representations of cradleboards. A cradleboard is a board made of wood or woven rushes and fitted with bedding or a pouch into which an infant is strapped in order to be carried on its mother's back (Fig. 3, 4, 7, 8, 12). The proposal is based on parallels with EC and MC terracottas representing cradleboards, as well as with Native American examples. For understanding the possible cultural significance of cradleboards in Cyprus in the Bronze Age we have turned to ethnographic data to suggest further avenues for interpretation.

Many scholars have written on Cypriot terracottas, and especially on the enigmatic plank figures, but most have assumed that the objects represent mortal or divine female figures, such as Astarte, who were connected with procreation and fertility. But if not women, then men, or at least some kind of generic human, whether ancestor or servant, or possibly a bisexual figure is being depicted.¹ This paper departs from earlier studies in rejecting the view that the planks were schematized female forms or even "embodied" entities at all. In-

stead, they are read as inanimate objects that were given human features to conjure their numinous qualities.

Dramatically different from the 'operative', three-dimensional nude figures animating the narrative scenes on pots, the 'static' planks, like stelai, are flat, rectangular forms with features reduced to staring eyes and a beak-like nose.² Their flatness and oddly monumental quality reminded Karageorghis of the aniconic *xoana* of later times: large, plank-like cult figures made of wood and incised. The existence of such statues in Early Bronze Age Cyprus is suggested by the terracotta shrine models from Kotchati that show a worshipper before a pillared wall surmounted by bulls' heads.³ The pillars on the walls of these model shrines may in turn be related to the piers and lintels – and in one case, a worshipper – sculpted in relief at the entrance of certain tombs. This correspondence is one of a constellation of observations that point to the existence of funerary cults and ancestor worship.⁴ Keswani related the plank figures to this spiritual milieu, and followed Talalay and Cullen in defining them as 'generic ancestor' figures.⁵ She stressed the importance of collective identity, 'kin-

ship ties' above individual identity.⁶ We agree that the planks probably do refer to family identity, but this characteristic is also very much in the spirit of cradleboards. Rather than either a sculptural or architectural prototype, however, we propose that the plank or upright that served as the physical model for the terracottas' shape was the cradleboard.

The plank figures do not portray either a man's or a woman's body in any style. And why should they be the only group of terracottas to use geometric or linear abstraction to render three-dimensional forms, when other categories of terracottas adopted a rounded, representational style, albeit highly simplified?⁷ Typologically, therefore, the plank figures are here considered to belong to the class comprising models of things: furniture and housewares, horns, sheaths, knives, boats, and cradleboards.

Their closest kin must be the anthropomorphized cradleboards (below), and the pots with faces that perhaps, like the plank figures, were "containers for spirits".⁸ Thus, the flatness of the planks was neither symbolic nor the result of an aesthetic choice, as some have thought, but was merely based on appearances.⁹ Neces-

sarily, this interpretative inversion, from objectified human to humanized object, radically alters our understanding of the planks' meaning(s) and symbolic role(s). Yet most of the stylistic features of the planks that to this writer so clearly evoke cradleboards have already been observed and commented on in detail by others. In fact, almost all the evidence needed to make the case for cradleboards may be found in the literature. Perhaps the connection between planks and cradleboards has not previously been elucidated because the female figure looms so large in our own culture, overshadowing other views. And admittedly, North American ethnographic material, the most illuminating source of comparanda for cradleboards, is certainly distant in space and time from the Bronze Age Mediterranean. Yet it provides one of our most valuable sources of documentation for both morphology and social practices, as others have also already discovered.¹⁰

Plank figures represent objects not figures

To begin with typology, the identification of planks as female figures makes no logical sense within any of the existing systems of classification because the planks' only identifiable sexual feature, breasts, is not consistently shown throughout any individual subclass, not even among the figures carrying cradleboarded infants, the so-called '*kourotrophoi*'. Karageorghis' notion¹¹ that all *kourotrophoi* must by definition be female is belied by the existence of a male figure tending a cradleboarded infant that was once part of a scenic composition on a vase.¹² Equally, the idea that bodily

surface display is intended by the incised designs of elaborate garments and jewelry, and that these necessarily feminize the figure,¹³ is based on a socially constructed notion of gender that may or may not be applicable to Early – Middle Bronze Age Cypriot society, and in any case can not be demonstrated from the evidence, given the infrequency of sexual characteristics among the planks and the paucity of detailed depictions of clothing among the frequently sexed figures in scenic compositions.¹⁴ In short, there is no incontestably, recognizably feminine class or sub-class in the polymorphous family of plank or slab or shoulder figurines.

Although several exhaustive typologies of plank figures have been constructed, no intelligible patterns have emerged – or at least none that we are able to perceive. Clearly, there are several broad categories – one head, two heads, rounded at the bottom, etc. – but within these, there is too much individual variation in details, especially of the incised decoration, to permit the creation of more refined and meaningful formal groupings. One of the most interesting results of a Campo's comparative statistical study of the planks was just this.¹⁵ As she candidly concluded, the "analysis of the associations between figures did not prove very helpful",



Fig. 1a & 1b. Red Polished Plank Figurine, front and back, ht. 27.1 cm. (Photo by the author; Courtesy Collection of Shelby White and Leon Levy).

and, “too much attention has been paid to these [superficial] differences and too little to intrinsic similarity”.¹⁶ The common features that emerge from the bewildering array of types are few: only the wide, flat surfaces and plank-like shape; the nose and eyes, and the incised designs on front and back.¹⁷

The ornament of the planks: cradleboard coverings

It has been widely observed that the designs, primarily rudimentary geometric patterns in narrow bands, must represent textiles and ornaments, and further, that this dress completely obscures the figure beneath.¹⁸ What is the nature of this clothing and jewelry? The closest parallels, and which may help to decode these patterns, are found in the rich repertoire of cradleboards and their coverings. For instance, concentric incised arcs on the planks, sometimes more widely spaced and joined by hatched diagonal incisions or combined with



Fig. 2. Red Polished Plank Figurine, ht. 17.8 cm. (Courtesy The Menil Collection, Houston, CA 6139).



Fig. 3. Indian baby on a cradleboard (Courtesy State Historical Society of North Dakota 0086-0692).

small round holes, are usually interpreted as necklaces, although they do not always hang only around the neck of the figures, but may also be arrayed across the chest between the shoulders or even lower on the belly (Fig. 1, 5, 10).¹⁹ The necklaces may also be suspended from the breasts when these are present (Fig. 1), an arrangement visually echoed in the decoration of a cradle from North Dakota (Fig. 3). An even more arresting comparison is the multiple ropes of beads festooned on the front of the ornate cradle pouch illustrated in Fig. 4. In Cyprus, such strands were probably made of faience. According to Washbourne,²⁰ the comb-like, or tassel motif sometimes incised on the back of the planks and more rarely, on the front, should be also be un-



Fig. 4. *Sabina Minthorn and Babe* (Moorhouse Collection, PH036_4339, Special Collections and University Archives, University of Oregon libraries; image courtesy of Special Collections and University Archives, University of Oregon libraries).

derstood as jewelry.²¹ But Belgiorno’s first interpretation,²² that the object is a small purse made of skin or material decorated with fringes and suspended from a cord, perfectly fits with the idea of a cradleboard, because Native Americans did in fact hang such small fringed pouches on cradles.²³ Instead of Belgiorno’s amulets, perfumes or



Fig. 5. Red Polished Plank Figure, ht. 12.5 cm., Desmond Morris Collection (Morris 1985, pl. 179; Courtesy Desmond Morris).

medicinal herbs, the Native American pouches contained the baby's umbilical cord, a precious relic associated with the child's life force.²⁴

The horizontal incised bands that often encircle the planks resemble the woven sashes that on Native American cradles were used to tie the infant's bedding – or the infant – to the board (Fig. 6, 7).²⁵ Both American and Cypriot cradleboards could have criss-cross lacing over the bedding, as shown on the cradled infant in the White Painted group in the Metropolitan Museum of a seated

mother with the cradleboard on her lap.²⁶ But on other cradleboards, the babies were tied with sashes bound around them and the board and knotted at the side, as shown on the planks and also on at least one Cypriot cradle model as well as on the cradled infants with *kourotraphoi*.²⁷ The diagonally incised lines occasionally depicted one on either side of the front of planks are also part of the cradles' bedding and not arms, as has often been stated.²⁸ They may appear side-by-side with plastically modeled arms, both on planks and on *kourotraphoi*, and should therefore be read as elements of the costume rather than as a second, stick-like pair of arms.²⁹ Moreover, like the necklaces, they may be depicted with beads or pendants along their length or hanging from their ends, or with fringes, as on Fig. 5, which may be compared to the cradleboard pictured in Fig. 7.

The emphasis on adornment and the variety of fashions may be a means of indicating individual persons who are dressed for a particular formal ceremony marking an important stage in their life, such as death or marriage.³⁰ A Campo, seeing the planks as images of mortal women, thought they could have been tokens of identity or status exchanged among communities as symbolic of the marriage-contract. Certainly, an explanation along these lines suits the planks' multiplicity of patterns and absence of corporeality far better than that which makes them into an immutable deity, who would presumably have a limited number of fixed sets of attributes, and in the case of a fertility or mother goddesses, prominent sexual characteristics. Just consider how the planks contrast with

the formal similarity and voluptuous nudity of the Astarte figures! We therefore agree with those who doubt that the planks were representations of goddesses, or intended to be used in sympathetic magic connected with fertility.³¹ Setting aside the interpretation of the sexless planks as fertility goddesses, readings that instead connect the objects to the social aspect of individuals and temporality obviate many puzzles of classification and interpretation.³² Interpreting the objects as cradleboards solves a few more difficulties, beginning with the vexing question of the breasts.

Most of the plank figures are devoid of sexual characteristics but approximately one-third do have



Fig. 6. Red Polished Plank Figure ht. 20.3 cm., Desmond Morris Collection (with modern sashes for comparison), (Morris 1985, pl. 177; Courtesy Desmond Morris).

small, widely spaced bosses on their shoulders that are thought to be breasts and to identify the figures as women (Figs. 1, 2, 6, 9). But if these bosses are significant sexual markers, then logically, their absence should also be meaningful, and most of the planks would therefore represent men. Merrillees suggested that the small “domed button” shapes could even represent men’s breasts.³³ Flourenzos and Belgiorno pursued this line of thought to its logical conclusion, making all breastless figures male,³⁴ but others consider all the planks as female, whether breasted or not, with their invisible (female)



Fig. 7. Pawnee family (detail), Cradleboard with Morningstar Design (Courtesy Western History Collections, University of Oklahoma, Cunningham-Prettyman Collection #144).

sexual characteristics hidden under the clothing. The artists, however, did not carry the dress designs over the breasts. Rather, they applied the clay pellets on top of the incised bands. The “breasts” could therefore be read as ornaments on the outside of the wrappings, something like the pair of disk-shaped brooches attached on the front of the cradle pouch in Fig. 3, for instance. The bosses may be toroid or conical and are usually pierced, resembling spindle whorls or disks (Fig. 1, 2).³⁵ They might also represent a pillow. The Cypriots did sometimes use dumbbell-shaped head supports on their cradleboards, as depicted by the two painted circles on the cradleboard model (Fig. 11), and exhibited on a Yaqui cradle from Sonora, Mexico (Fig. 12).³⁶ Understandably,

the occasional translation of the pendants or pillows into breasts was the result of an anthropomorphism of inanimate objects whose shape suggested a corresponding human form. This occurred especially in the more elaborated and naturalistic slab figures and in a few of the *kourotrophoi*³⁷ – although in spite of the subject matter, breasts were not compulsory in this group.³⁸ It may be noted that in other classes of terracottas, anthropomorphism increasingly developed towards the end of EC III and in the Middle Cypriot period.³⁹ Another possible explication of the bosses takes shape when one compares the position and form of the brass disks attached to the ends of the two planks making up the Comanche cradle from Texas and the breasts and faces on the highly

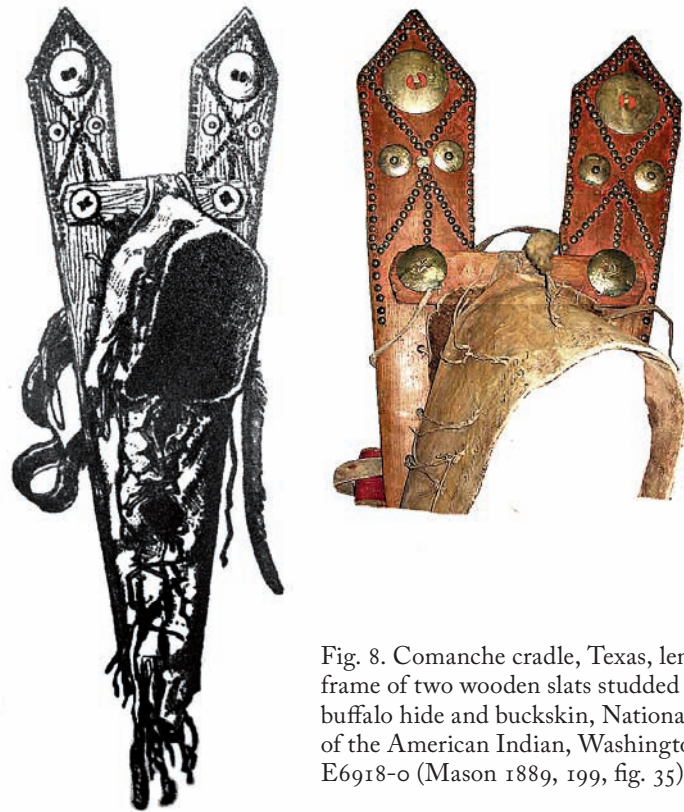


Fig. 8. Comanche cradle, Texas, length 42”, frame of two wooden slats studded with brass, buffalo hide and buckskin, National Museum of the American Indian, Washington, no. E6918-o (Mason 1889, 199, fig. 35).

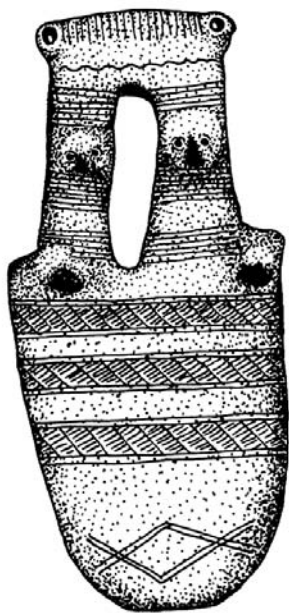


Fig. 9. Red Polished Plank Figure, Lapithos T. 21, ht. 28 cm., Cyprus Museum no. A1 (Morris 1985, Fig. 222; Courtesy Desmond Morris).



Fig. 10. Red Polished Plank Figure, Lapithos T. 18, no. 206, ht. 23.5 cm., Cyprus Museum no. A4 (Morris 1985, Fig. 224; Courtesy Desmond Morris).



Fig. 11. White Painted Cradleboard model, length 16 cm., (Courtesy Musée d'Art et d'Histoire, Geneva, Inv. no. P.298, and V. Karageorghis).

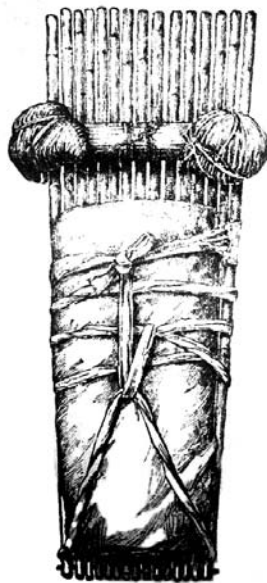


Fig. 12. Yaqui cradle, cane, Sonora, Mexico, National Museum of the American Indian, Washington (Mason 1887, 185, fig. 16).

abstracted double-headed plank figures (Fig. 8 and 10). The parallel also suggests a possible source of the double- and triple-headed forms. On the present analogy, they reflect other types of cradleboard construction, and need not be different in symbolic meaning from the single-headed type.⁴⁰

The four types of Native American cradleboard illustrated in this article represent only a fraction of the tremendous variety of forms and decorations that have been made.⁴¹ There may also have been more variety in Cyprus than the eighteen surviving terracotta models attest. Each of the Native American cradleboards is unique, as were probably also the Cypriot ones, if not in structure then in the coverings and decoration. Generally, American cradleboards have a body or frame, a bed, a covering, a pillow or some other device for the head, lashing, sometimes a footrest and usually a bow or arch to protect the head.⁴² The bow or arch is either fixed or collapsible. As we have seen, the swaddled baby was lashed to its bed by broad bands of soft skin that were later replaced by woven sashes or long cotton rags that passed around the baby and the frame.⁴³ Alternatively, the board had a skin pulled over it leaving an opening in front that was laced together.

The use of cradleboards in Bronze Age Cyprus

The use of cradleboards in Cyprus is attested both by the terracotta models and by osteological evidence for headshaping. The use of cradleboards can result in the intentional or unintentional flattening of the back of the infant's head (occipital flattening),

or in other types of head shaping, depending on whether, how long, and in what position, the child's head was held fixed against the board.⁴⁴ It should be noted, however, that the use of cradleboards did not necessarily result in head shaping because during the Early and Middle Cypriot periods, "headshaping occur[ed] in moderate forms only, and [was] never universal within populations".⁴⁵ Head shaping was therefore not necessarily connected with cradleboard use and conversely, the absence of head shaping was not necessarily indicative of the absence of cradleboards.⁴⁶ Variations could have been a matter of 'family preference'.⁴⁷ Cradleboards with and without babies in or on them, are represented in both Red Polished and White Painted wares as independent objects, on the arm of *kourotrophoi*, and in 'scenic' or narrative compositions (Fig. 13-15). With rare exceptions in the scenic compositions, where the arches may have been collapsed, the cradleboards all show this device at the top of the cradle as well as some kind of bedding decorated with bands of geometric ornament.

Cradleboards were the most common type of terracotta furniture model in the later Early and Middle Cypriot periods. After this time, along with plank figures, they ceased to be depicted in Cypriot art either as freestanding models or in the arms of the Late Cypriot *kourotrophoi*, whose babies are neither cradled nor swaddled.⁴⁸ But cradles did not vanish from Cypriot life, judging by the continuation of headshaping practices.⁴⁹ Perhaps the iconographic shift away from representations of cradles and plank figures had something to do

with changing conditions of community and family life due to the political and social upheavals that accompanied the opening up of the island to the eastern Mediterranean world during the Middle Cypriot period.⁵⁰ This is a complex question that is beyond the scope of this short study. What we can say is that the multiple EC – MC terracottas of cradleboarded infants – over thirty preserved – is surely indicative of the high social and symbolic importance attached at that time to this peculiarly Cypriot custom. 'Peculiarly' Cypriot because surprisingly, there is nothing comparable in the art of other neighboring, pre-Classical cultures, which also underscores the special character of this cultural manifestation. The closest parallel that Theodossiadou could find was a cradled child from 6th century BC Rhodes.⁵¹ In the Bronze Age Cyclades, in pharaonic Egypt, and possibly in Mycenaean Greece, infants were carried in a sling or in a basket, but depictions of infants are rare, and cradle models are not attested outside of Cyprus.⁵² Was the distribution of the cradleboard really as restricted as the surviving evidence indicates, or conversely, why were these objects so prominent in Cypriot iconography and not anywhere else? Their frequency in Cyprus led Theodossiadou to wonder whether they could they have been "connected to a "cult" at a time of high child mortality",⁵³ but the evidence for infant mortality is scant and difficult to assess.⁵⁴

A connection between plank figures and burials has been posited, in which the figures symbolize rebirth and regeneration.⁵⁵ But there is no concrete evidence that they were particularly associated with infant

or child interments, or with women, who might have died in childbirth.⁵⁶ Most figures are without provenance, and while almost all of the excavated planks were found in tombs, overall, they were actually not as well represented in burials as might be expected, had their primary meaning and purpose been funerary.⁵⁷ Webb counted just 18 female figurines from over 299 EC interments, or roughly 6%, and a similar proportion among MC burials. This led her to conclude, "...there is little to suggest that they were important in funerary ideology other than as valued possessions which occasionally found their way into the graves".⁵⁸ The relative paucity of planks in tombs, as well as the growing evidence for their use in settlements – thirty-five from Marki-*Alo-nia*, including a fragment showing evidence of mending, indicates that these objects might be kept in the home for long periods and even recycled, rather than being created primarily to serve in funerary rituals.⁵⁹ The distribution of fragmentary, 'poorly treated' planks in homes also points away from cult statues to something more personal and familial.⁶⁰

The iconography of the cradleboard

The similarities of form and decoration between plank figures and some of the freestanding cradle models are striking, so much so, that Merrillees and Des Gagniers & Karageorghis,⁶¹ initially took the cradle in Fig. 13a & b for a plank with "a 'horizontal basket shaped handle on head' derived from the hood on the model cradles".⁶² As already noted, both planks and cradles are decorated with horizontal bands of the same simple geometric



Fig. 13a & 13b. Red Polished Cradleboard model, front and back, length 19.2 cm., Cyprus Museum, Nicosia, no. A15 (Karageorghis 1991a, pl. LII: 4; Courtesy Cyprus Department of Antiquities and V. Karageorghis).



Fig. 14. Red Polished Cradleboard Figure, length 16.5 cm., Pierides Collection (Morris 1985, fig. 237; Courtesy Desmond Morris).



Fig. 15. Red Polished Cradleboard Figure, Lapithos T. 15, length 18.9 cm., Cyprus Museum, Nicosia, no. A21 (Karageorghis 1991a, pl. LII: 5; Courtesy Cyprus Department of Antiquities and V. Karageorghis).

designs representing bindings. Incised zigzags on the backs of the planks are read as locks of hair but they also appear on at least two of the cradle model backs. On Fig. 1 and 13b, the hair is rendered identically.⁶³ Morris considered the formal similarity between the planks and the cradles but rejected the idea that the former might be stylized depictions of swaddled babies because the planks are sometimes shown holding babies themselves, and it would make no sense for a baby to be holding another baby.⁶⁴ But the *kourotrophoi* plank figures are so different in spirit from the mother-and-child compositions in narrative scenes. The rectangular forms of plank and planked child mirror one another – the child-plank inert and as flat as a board like its mother.⁶⁵ The infant held in the scenic compo-

sition representing women around a trough, on the other hand, although possibly only swaddled rather than planked, is not only not stiff, but endearingly lively and alert both in facial expression and gesture.⁶⁶ Morris' difficulty disappears if the planks are personified cradles, rather than either mothers or swaddled babies. The *kourotrophos* is not a mother-and-child, but a personified cradle holding a cradled infant. The redundancy of the image reinforces it: the plank is the symbolic and magical manifestation of the cradle, while the one in which the baby lies is its physical cradle. At least three of the cradle models are actually anthropomorphized.⁶⁷ On the backboard of the Pierides cradle and on a fragmentary cradle from Marki that is almost identical to it, eyes, eyebrows and nose have been

incised with dots and short strokes (Fig. 14).⁶⁸ The 'double cradle' from Lapithos, with its two arches (Fig. 15) has a nose shown in relief and, according to Karageorghis, also "two punctures for the eyes and nostrils, horizontal groove for the mouth".⁶⁹ The cylindrical blob on the left must be a child. The two disks ('breasts') are present, and below these are the ghostly outlines of crossed arms and hands. Two other planks show the anthropomorphized cradles' arms together with the little stumps that we suggest represent a child's folded arms inside the cradle pouch, as indicated in the White Painted cradle model in the Metropolitan Museum.⁷⁰

The only material objection to the identification of plank figures with cradleboards that some may raise is that if the plank figures are projec-

tions of cradleboards, where are the arches? The arches appear on virtually all the cradle models, so why not on the planks? The answer must be that the arch was omitted for formal as well as thematic reasons. The planks are emphatically flat with only a few shallow relief features. A three-dimensional open hoop would detract from their iconic presence, if it was at all visually obtrusive and obscured or overshadowed the face. When seen head-on, the turban-like headgear, sometimes executed in relief, worked just as well to suggest the hoop (compare Fig. 2, 5, 6, 13). It was not necessary to translate the arch literally for the symbolic purpose of the planks. Besides, the arches inevitably broke off, as indeed they have on almost all the cradle models, which possibly served a more informal purpose than the planks.⁷¹

As for the symbolic significance of plank figures, their identification with cradleboards raises many intriguing new possibilities when we turn for ideas to the Native American customs, beliefs and practices connected with the cradleboards' creation and use. Although the connection between the Cypriot planks and funerary rituals is not certainly established, there may well have been a connection with death, in view of the fragility of a human life in its first year. The general purpose of the planks then, would have been apotropaic. Among Native Americans, the elaboration of magical ceremonies before and after the birth of a child, and during its first year of life, were in response not only to the mystery and the blessing of birth, but also to high infant mortality.⁷² From tribe to tribe, the customs and rituals associated with this first

phase of life were many and varied, yet there are certain recurring themes that can not help but strike a familiar chord to those who have considered the Bronze Age Cypriots' possible views on mortality, identity and gender. As a brief introduction to this topic, we note the following:

1. Family ties: Native American cradles were usually made by close family members, often a grandmother, sometime the father; sometimes a group of female or male relatives, but not professional cradle-makers. This explains the uniqueness of their designs: they were made to order by non-specialists, not stockpiled.⁷³ The making and the giving of a cradle was an expression of family relations, bonds, and obligations.

2. Social and individual identity: The multiplicity of designs bespoke family or tribal identity.⁷⁴ The presentation and first use of the cradleboard by the infant was an important ceremonial event. It was sometimes connected with the child's naming ceremony. Among the Montana Indians, an elaborate cradle was usually offered as a gift when a child was given in adoption.⁷⁵

3. Gender: Gender might be indicated in the abstract, geometric ornaments on the cradle or it might not.⁷⁶ If the cradle was made before the child was born, the sex was unknown and therefore not indicated. Sometimes boys' cradles were gendered and girls' were not. Every combination of gendering or non-gendering was possible. As Knapp and Meskel observed, "certain artifacts may reveal characteristics of individuals and sex *per se* should not be regarded as a principal identifying feature". For cradles, certainly, sex was only one, and not

necessarily, the defining characteristic.

4. Magical protection of life and health: The cradle was intimately connected with the infant's physical self. It was considered a sacred object with apotropaic powers that could provide both physical and magical protection to the infant's body and spirit during its first precarious year of life.⁷⁷ As Washbourne aptly put it, in connection with Cypriot figures, "the protective cradleboard takes on the role of mother".⁷⁸ A contemporary Native American described it as "a house for the beginning of life" and "a safe haven for our children".⁷⁹ In some groups, the cradle was used for several children in the same family and passed down.⁸⁰ If the children were healthy, another family might request the cradle, believing that it would make their child grow up free from illness.⁸¹ In that case, the cradle possessed health or life-giving powers. In other groups, however, a new cradle was used for each child and each individual baby's identity was inseparable from its cradle, like a protective shell.

5. Death: Cradles were used for a minimum of about 5 months up to about a year. They were therefore associated with the most vulnerable period in a person's life. If the child died during its 'cradle days', the cradle was discarded or destroyed, or buried with the child, or placed on its grave.⁸² Among the Montana Indians, after the death of an infant, the mother carried a 'mourning cradle' filled with black quills and feathers for up to one year.

Native American ideas and practices connected with cradles reveal that the making of the objects, their decoration, their use by young infants, their association with death, and the

meanings invested in cradleboards through all of these steps, combined to make them exceptionally powerful symbolic vehicles for expressing feelings about identity within the context of family ties, and the protection and fostering of those relationships. Thinking of plank figures as modeled on cradleboards rather than on the human body solves many of the

problems that have beset the formal analyses of their shape and decoration. As for whether the cradleboard could acquire a symbolic significance equal to that of a mother goddess, one has only to consider the rest of the terracotta repertoire: the number of depictions of cradles, of both individual male and female figures associated with infants in cradles, or of pairs or

groups of busy adult figures that also included cradled infants, to see that the emphasis, at least in the iconography, was on family and community rather than on sexuality and fertility. With this social background in mind, the symbolic importance of the cradleboard and the interpretation of the planks as cradleboards become more readily understandable.

NOTES

- 1 i.e. Åström 1972, 254; Merrillees 1980, 173-174; Belgiorno 1984, 16; Orphanides 1990, 47-50; Talalay & Cullen 2002; Keswani 2005, 349-350.
- 2 'Operative' vs 'static': Merrillees 1980, 172.
- 3 Des Gagniers & Karageorghis 1976, 8; Karageorghis 1991a, 49; Karageorghis 1991b, 11, 14; Washbourne 1991b, 54.
- 4 Keswani 2005, 349-350, and references cited there.
- 5 Talalay & Cullen 2002.
- 6 Keswani 2005, 361-362.
- 7 Karageorghis 1991a, 49.
- 8 Morris 1985, 150-163; Pluciennik 2002, 227; Karageorghis 1991b, 12; Karageorghis 1991a, pls. LIX-LXIV.
- 9 Morris 1985, 136; Karageorghis 1991a, 49; a Campo 119.
- 10 Lorentz 2003; Mogelonsky 1988, 233, 234 n. 33; Knapp & Meskeil 1997, 186.
- 11 Karageorghis 1991a, 50.
- 12 Karageorghis 1991a, 141, SC19, pl. LXXXV:6.
- 13 Karageorghis 1977: 54-60.
- 14 Merrillees 1980, 181; Knapp & Meskeil 1994, 188.
- 15 a Campo 1994.
- 16 a Campo 1994, 116, 120, 147.
- 17 a Campo 1994, 145-146.
- 18 Morris 1985, 161; Washbourne 1991b, 46; a Campo 1994, 120.
- 19 Karageorghis 1991a, pls. XXI: 1, XXII: 3, XXVI: 2; Flourenzos 1975, 31; Orphanides 1986, 102; Orphanides 1988, 188; Washbourne 2000a, 89; Washbourne 2000b, 97.
- 20 Washbourne 2000b.
- 21 Washbourne 2000b; Washbourne 2000a, 82-89. See also Morris' (1985, 138-141) detailed analysis of the comb designs, which he interprets as schematic representations of human figures.
- 22 Belgiorno 1984, 37.
- 23 A few of these pouches are illustrated in Catlin (1876, 232). More recently, Belgiorno (1996) proposed comparing the 'combs' to *sistra*.
- 24 Mason 1889, 203.
- 25 Mason 1889, 184. All the plank figures illustrated in this article have horizontal bands of ornament that are the same front and back, Karageorghis 1991a, pls. XXIII, 2; XXX, 3; XXXV, 1, and XXXII, 3, except for the uppermost wavy line.
- 26 Karageorghis 2000, 22:8.
- 27 Karageorghis 1991a, pl. LII:2; pl. XLVI, 1; 78, Fig. 80.
- 28 Karageorghis 1977, 55; Merrillees 1980, 175; Belgiorno 1984, 18-19; Orphanides 1988, 188; Karageorghis 1991a, 49-50.
- 29 a Campo 1994, 104; Morris 1985, 162, 148, Fig. 228 from Lapithos T. 313B; Karageorghis 1991a, 77-78; Washbourne 2000b, 12.
- 30 Belgiorno 1984, 34; a Campo 1994, 167-168.
- 31 Orphanides 1986, 70; a Campo 1994, 167.
- 32 Belgiorno 1984, 34; a Campo 1994, 165-169; Knapp & Meskeil 1997, 187, 199.
- 33 Merrillees 1980, 174.
- 34 Flourenzos 1975, 30; Belgiorno 1984, 34.
- 35 See Washbourne (2000a, 98) for spindle whorl weights at the ends of the 'arms'.
- 36 Yaqui cradles were made of "reeds such as arrow shafts" that were lashed together. The pillow was a "bundle of little splints laid on transversely", with a pad of rags at either end, Mason 1889, 184.

- 37 Karageorghis 1991a, types Bi and Bj, pls. XLVIII-LI.
- 38 a Campo 1994, 145.
- 39 Des Gagniers & Karageorghis 1976, 7.
- 40 Washbourne 2000b, 45.
- 41 Mason 1889, infra; Mason 1910, 358.
- 42 Mason 1910, 357.
- 43 Fletscher & La Flesch 1992, 327; Mason 1889, 184.
- 44 Domurad 1986, 143, 162.
- 45 Lorentz 2003.
- 46 Theodossiadou 1991, 50.
- 47 Domurad 1986, 171.
- 48 Merrillees 1988, infra.
- 49 Theodossiadou 1991, 48-49, 50; Domurad 1986, 218.
- 50 a Campo 1994, 169; Knapp & Meskell 1997, 199.
- 51 Theodossiadou 1991, 52-53.
- 52 Viz. the Cycladic marble figures from the Collection of Shelby White and Leon Levy, on loan to the Metropolitan Museum, 2000.81.2, 2000.81.5; Zglinicki 1979, 72-73, 18th dynasty relief; Janssen & Janssen 1990, 21, fig. 10, reliefs from the tombs of Huy, TT40 and Neferhotep, TT49; French 1971, 144, pl. 23b, Phi type figurine from Mycenae, although according to French it is uncertain if the child is carried in "what resembles a kangaroo pouch on the chest" or just enfolded by the mother's arms; aside from the unprovenanced marbles cited above. In stark contrast to Bronze Age Cyprus, kourotrophoi are virtually unknown in either Cycladic or Minoan art, and representations of children are rare, Rutter 2004.
- 53 Theodossiadou 1991, 49.
- 54 It appears to have been quite high in Egypt in New Kingdom times, however, Janssen & Janssen 1990, 21.
- 55 Belgiorino 1984, 34; Merrillees 1980, 184; Merrillees 1987, 53; Washbourne 2000a, 37; Washbourne 2000b, 39.
- 56 Karageorghis (1977, 56) tries to adduce evidence for the association of plank figures with burials of women at Lapithos, but the data is inconclusive, a Campo 1994, 109-110, 113.
- 57 a Campo 1994, 166; Keswani 2005, 375.
- 58 Webb 1992, 90.
- 59 Frankel & Webb 2006, 156-157. For figures from settlement contexts see reference in Frankel and Webb 1996b, 188, and Frankel and Webb 2006, 157. I am very grateful to J. Webb for kindly sending me the text and relevant figures from the latest Marki-*Alonia* publication. A fragmentary White Painted cradle model (with baby) was discovered in 2006 in a MC household context at Politiko-*Troullia* (mentioned by kind permission of S. Falconer and P. Fall, Directors of the Politiko-*Troullia* excavations).
- 60 Mogelonsky 1996, 200.
- 61 Merrillees 1980, 1740; Des Gagniers & Karageorghis 1975, 35, no. 12.
- 62 Merrillees (1980, 178, no. 5) also noted that a plank-shaped figure from Lapithos T. 316, no. 47 "seems to suggest an imitation of a cradle with a small child, but is too badly preserved to allow of an interpretation in details".
- 63 Orphanides 1988, 188; Karageorghis 1991a; Washbourne 2000b, 39.
- 64 Morris 1985, 152.
- 65 Washbourne 2000, 39.
- 66 Karageorghis 1991a, 123, 144-145, pl. CIV, 1.
- 67 Washbourne 2000b, 38.
- 68 Frankel & Webb 2006, Fig. 5.1: P9792.
- 69 Karageorghis 1991a, 96.
- 70 Karageorghis 1991a, pls. L:4, LI:3.
- 71 The Native Americans also made miniature or model cradles for use in formal rituals, as toys, or to mark rites of passage, Vankeuren 1994, 9; Lenssen, Whiteford & Brown McGreevy 1981, 3.
- 72 Feder 1978, 41.
- 73 Lenssen, Whiteford & Brown McGreevy 1981, 3; Sioux Indian Museum 1988; Hail 2000, 18, 33-34; Bibby 2004, 38, 64, 77, 111.
- 74 Hail 2000, frontispiece, 32, 67.
- 75 Mason 1889, 185.
- 76 Bibby 2004, 38, 63.
- 77 Vankeuren 1994, 10; Bibby 2004, 108; Lenssen, Whiteford & Brown McGreevy 1981, 3.
- 78 Washbourne 2000b, 39.
- 79 Hail 2000, frontispiece.
- 80 Mason 1910, 357.
- 81 Hilger 1951, 21; Feder 1978, 46.
- 82 Mason 1910, 358; Hail 2000, 32.

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